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MEMORANDUM FOR: 40 Committee
SUBJECT: IDEALIST Program

1. In December 1969, the President approved continuation of the IDEALIST Program through FY 1971 for the purpose of retaining an additional option in the event of unforeseen contingencies. He also directed the then 303 Committee to review the project prior to consideration of the FY 1972 renewal request. To assist in this review, information is provided herein on the current status and capabilities of the program.

2. Present IDEALIST operational assets consist of two permanent detachments. One detachment is at Edwards Air Force Base, California, with four U-2R aircraft, five operationally ready

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4. The following information illustrates the capabilities of specific IDEALIST Program assets:

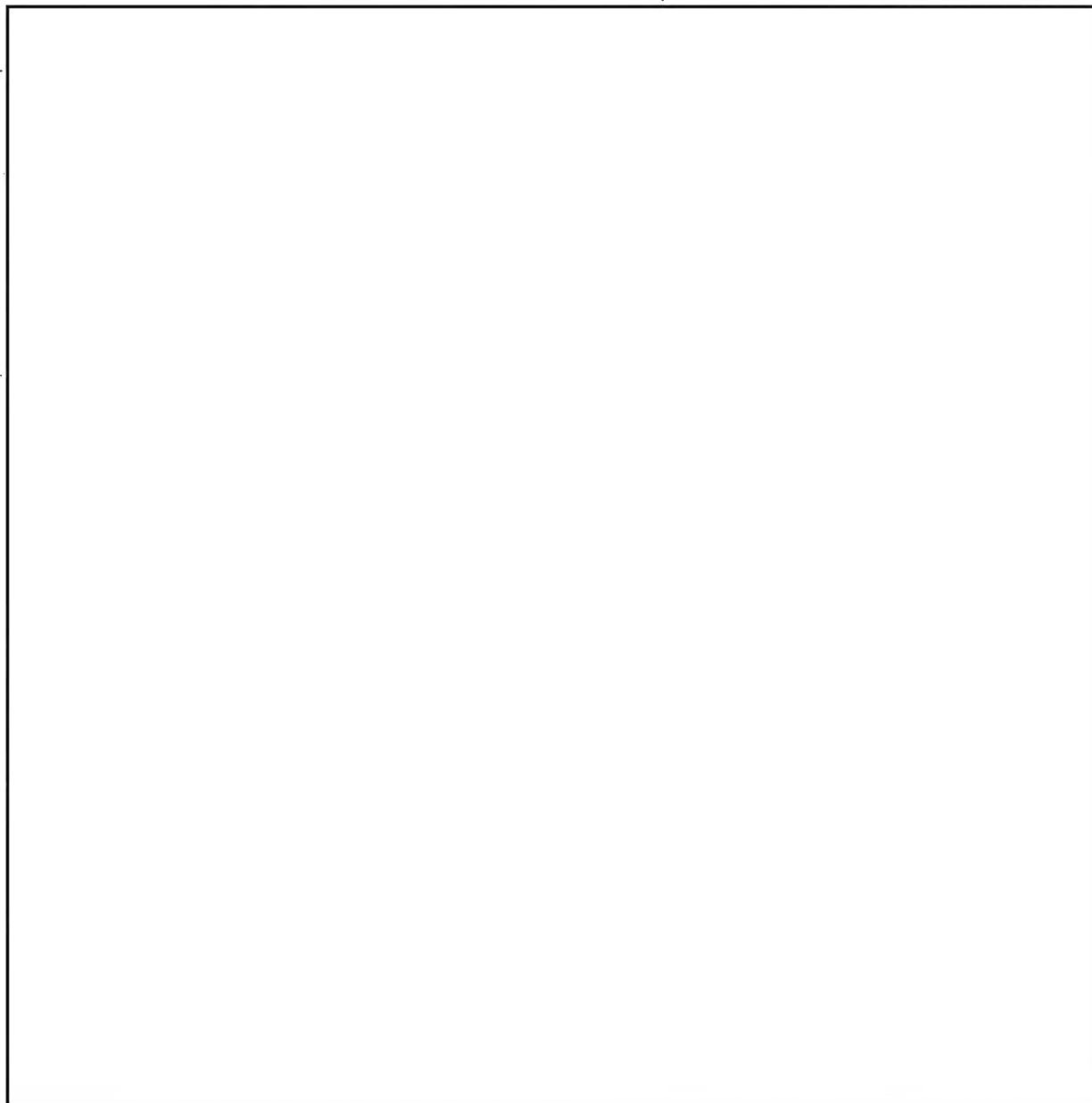
a. Photographic systems: The "H" Camera system can cover an area from 225 to 1370 nautical miles in length. It can be used in vertical or oblique positions and achieves six to 10 inch vertical resolution. The IRIS II system can acquire 2100 to 3600 nautical miles linear coverage, a 60 to 70 nautical miles lateral coverage, and a one foot vertical resolution. The varying linear coverage for both systems is dependent on the mode of camera operation.

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d. The IDEALIST U-2R is certified for operations from selected US aircraft carriers. This carrier capability enhances the world-wide operational capability by providing added flexibility if land bases are not readily accessible.

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5. The IDEALIST Program has demonstrated its capability to conduct photographic and electronic reconnaissance, peripherally and over denied and hostile territory, on virtually a world-wide basis. Operations off the mainland China coast show that much activity can be perceived without actually penetrating hostile territory. Events in the Middle East crisis indicate that much valuable information could have been obtained without actually overflying denied areas. With its current status and capabilities, the CIA U-2 program provides a rapid response reconnaissance vehicle that can be employed in a manner that allows plausible denial of US involvement. Thus, it continues to provide flexibility in the selection of options if other reconnaissance systems are neutralized and in the event of future unforeseen contingencies.

CARLE E. DUCKETT
Director, CIA Reconnaissance Programs



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SIGNATURE RECOMMENDED:

Director of Special Activities

Date

Approval for Release to the 40 Committee:

Director, Central Intelligence

Date

SAS/O/OSA: _____ (8 July 1970)

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